

THE MARYLAND STATE HORTICULTURAL DEPARTMENT

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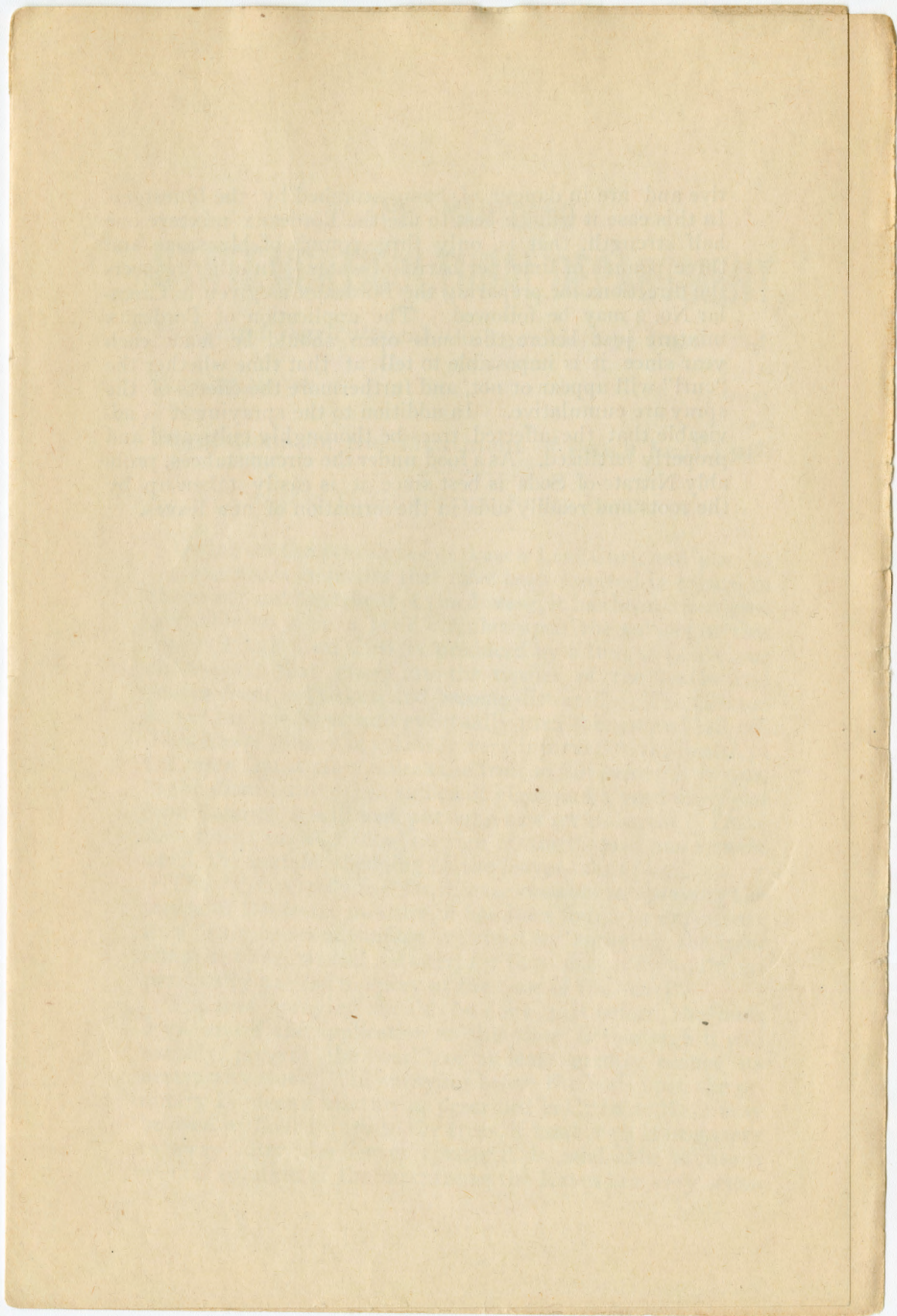
Suggestions for the Treatment of Peach Leaf Curl.

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Owing to the prevalence of Peach Leaf Curl, and also to the numerous inquiries that have been received in regard to the cause and treatment of the disease, it has been considered advisable to issue a brief circular upon the subject at this time. Peach Leaf Curl is produced by a fungus (*Exoascus deformans*) that grows into the tissues of the leaves and causes them to thicken and become distorted. The affected leaves become paler and eventually turn brown and fall off. This loss of foliage is not only very injurious to the health of the trees, but it often causes the fruit to fall before it is ripe. If the diseased tree has sufficient vigor and a good supply of food material, it will soon put out a new set of leaves. These new leaves usually show no sign of the disease and remain until the normal shedding of the leaves takes place.

The best remedy for the disease consists in spraying the tree with Bordeaux mixture, it has been found by experience that little or no advantage is gained by spraying the trees after the blossoms fall or later; for this reason it would be practically useless to spray at the time of the "curl".

The first spraying should be done just before the buds open, and if the application at this time is thorough it will usually prevent the "curl", or at least greatly reduce its destructive work. In spraying before the buds open the ordinary Bordeaux mixture as described in Circular No. 2 may be used without injury to the trees, if however it is necessary to spray after the leaves appear it is advisable to use a weaker solution of the mixture as the leaves are very sensi-



tive and are in danger of being scorched by the bluestone. In this case it will be best to use the Bordeaux mixture one half strength, that is, only three pounds of bluestone and three pounds of lime per barrel of water. In other respects the directions for preparing the Bordeaux as given in Circular No. 2 may be followed. The application of Bordeaux mixture just before the buds open should be made each year since it is impossible to tell at that time whether the "curl" will appear or not, and furthermore the effects of the spray are cumulative. In addition to the spraying it is advisable that the affected trees be thoroughly cultivated and properly fertilized. As a food under the circumstances, probably Nitrate of Soda is best since it is easily taken up by the roots and readily aids in the formation of new leaves.